1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

181 831 Mr. Punnett has suggested elsewhere,[1] a reason why polyandry is so rare a form of marriage. The practice of polyandry must almost inevitably weaken the sentiment of possession on the part of the man which does so much to maintain the more ordinary forms of marriage.

[177] The low sexual morality of the Todas is not, however, limited in its scope to the relations within the Toda community. Conflicting views are held by those who know the Nilgiri Hills as to the relations of the Todas with the other inhabitants, and especially with the train of natives which the European immigration to the hills has brought in its wake. The general opinion on the hills is that in this respect the morality of the Todas is as low as it well could be, but it is a question whether this opinion is not too much based on the behaviour of the inhabitants of one or two villages near the European settlements, and I think it is probable that the larger part of the Todas remain more uncontaminated than is generally supposed.

[144] That the Todas are perhaps not so black as they are painted is suggested by two considerations. There is little evidence of the existence of many half-breeds. I examined in one way or another over 500 Todas and must have seen nearly the whole of the 800 people who form the Toda population. I saw few who suggested Tamil or Badaga intermixture and only one boy whose appearance suggested European parentage. A more careful examination than I gave might, however, have revealed other suspicious cases, and perhaps in a race which practices infanticide the absence or paucity of half-breeds may not carry much weight.

The other consideration is of a different kind and tends to show not only that the Todas are not so black as they are painted, but that they are not so black as they paint themselves.

143 831 By means of the genealogical record I was able to work out the relationship to one another of forty-three individuals suffering from colour-blindness. Since this condition runs mainly in the female line, it does not afford very cogent evidence of paternity; but a full examination of my records

[1] *Loc. cit.*

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

seems to show that colour-blind men, or rather males of colour-blind families, had colour-blind descendants more often than perhaps might have been expected if the Todas are in practice quite as promiscuous as their social regulations allow them to be. The record of the affinity of the colour-blind suggests that in spite of the theoretical promiscuity, the husbands are, in practice, very often the fathers of their children.

A few histories of individuals may be given as examples of the various marriage customs which have been described in this chapter. One of the most married of Toda women is Puvizveli of Kusharf (65). She was married in infancy to Singudr (55), of the same clan as Sinkòrs, the mother of Puvizveli, and the two were probably the *matchuni* of one another, though only in a distant way. Puvizveli was taken from Singudr by Madsu and Koboners (58), who gave for her three buffaloes. From them she was transferred to Kangudr of Piedr (62), it being arranged that he should pay eleven buffaloes. Soon after joining Kangudr, Puvizveli became ill, and since there is a prohibition of marriages between the clans of Piedr and Kusharf, it was agreed that the pair should separate, and the woman was taken by Tütners and Etamudri (58). The eleven buffaloes had never been paid by Kangudr, so Tütners and his brother gave their buffaloes directly to Madsu and Koboners, but only four instead of eleven. All these transactions took place while Puvizveli was still young, but by her new husbands she had a son who died soon after birth. During her second pregnancy, she was taken by Perpakh and Tebkudr (68), who gave six buffaloes. The transference took place before the *pursiitpimi* ceremony had been performed. Perpakh gave the bow and arrow, and the daughter since born is regarded as the child of Perpakh and Tebkudr. Puvizveli has also a Tarthar *mokhthodvaiol*.

Edjog of Kuudr (56) was married in infancy to Nargudr (62), the son of her mother's brothers, and therefore her *matchuni* in the nearest sense. From him Kiudners (70) and his two brothers took her for five buffaloes. Kiudners died

13: Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW60 Toda AW60

had both received pieces of cloth from the cicisbeo of their wife.

So ingrained in Toda customs is the *mokhthoditi* institution that somebody who died without having either a *mokhthodvaiol* or a *sedvaitazmokh* would have to have one appointed after death so as to fill the place reserved for that person at the funeral rites. For cicisbei have an important function to fulfil on this occasion, and no ceremony would be complete without it. It is significant that a brother of the woman's husband is preferred in the case of such a posthumous appointment.

At the cremation of Ling Mish (23, called after Miss C. F. Ling!), a Tarar woman married to a man of the Norsh *modol*, on the 27th July, 1939, I saw her cicisbeo, a Teivilkh, come forward at the moment when her body had been prepared to be laid on the pyre, and insert with his left hand some limes, three handfuls of the grain which the Todas call *patcherski* (samai), jaggery, a piece of the dark *än* cloth, and the strings (*penor*) of his own *kuvn*, into the pocket of the deceased's *putkuli*. I was told that had she not had a lover, another man of the Teivilkh moiety would have been chosen to carry out this last rite it being essential to do so. Rivers says that the *mokhthodvaiol* should go to the funeral with his ring on the ring-finger of his left hand. He should make the *kalmelpudithi* salutation to the woman's father before the buffaloes have been caught, and afterwards insert the symbolic objects into his dead mistress's garment with his left hand – as if to mark that his relations with her were really *de la main gauche*. In the case of a man dying, exactly the same rites will be carried out by his *sedvaitazmokh*, except that she will not make obeisance to the man's father; her brothers will in her stead (see *The Todas*, p. 366).

The Todas always make a point of saying that they may not have any sexual relations, even clandestine, with non-Todas, and we have seen that a divorce from a woman can be sought for if she has been convicted of such an offence. It is, I was told, a particularly heinous crime for a Toda woman to have intercourse with someone not belonging to the tribe. In this way, we are led to believe, Toda racial stock has been kept "pure" throughout the centuries, and I have even heard it said by Indian physical anthropologists that the tribe is of a degenerate physical type, because there is too much intermarriage, and "the genes do not circulate enough".

And yet it seems that with the Muduga tribe of the Walluvanad taluk in Malabar there exists a definite institutionalised sexual relation based upon the hereditary friendship of some Todas with a few leading